

A  
True Believer's  
C H O I C E  
AND  
P L E A S U R E.

Instanced in  
The Exemplary LIFE  
OF  
M<sup>rs</sup> MARY COXE,  
The Late Wife of  
Doctor THOMAS COXE.

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Preached for her Funeral  
By RICHARD BAXTER.

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Prov. 10. 7. *The memory of the just shall be blessed, but the  
name of the wicked shall rot.*

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L O N D O N,  
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To my Worthy and much Honoured

**F R I E N D,**  
**Dr. THOMAS COXE.**

S I R,

**T** *Hough your great Kindness and Care of the health of me and mine, much oblige me to you, and your Personal Worth much more, and your worthy Children command my great Respect and Love; yet none of these should have moved me to say a word of all that I have said of your deceased Wife, which I had not verily believed to be true: And it was Gods Grace in her, which much more commanded it, than all my debt to you and yours.*

*She was so Exemplary, as that I think it my Duty for the good of others, to make this Publication of her Character, and of this Sermon.*

## The Epistle Dedicatory.

*But one great Defect is here to be notified to the Reader, That almost all her secret way of Duty, and particular Converse is omitted, which you that were still with her, could have described; For I thought meet to say no more than I either knew my self, or was obvious and known to many.*

*The words which I heard but yesterday from the mouth of your Brother in discourse, were such as I doubt can be said of few, that in so many Years, from the hour of her Marriage, to her Death, she was never known to do one disobliging action, or speak one disobliging word, of or to any one of her Husbands Kindred or Relations.*

*Had it seemed meet to you, or to your worthy and ingenious Son, and your pious Daughter (the true image of her Mother) to have been the Describer of the Soul and Life, of this Exemplary Saint, how much more fully could you have done it, than I, that was so much less acquainted with her.*

*She*



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## The Epistle Dedicatory.

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*She is gone home, and you and I are at the door ; The Lord give us so to live by Faith on the Promise and Love of God, and the things unseen, that thence we may daily fetch our ruling Motives, and stablishing Consolations, and not from a transitory deceitful world ; and following Christ and his Saints under the Cross, may with them possess the incorruptible Crown ; and be found at his Call among those that love his appearing, and be for ever with the Lord. Amen, Amen.*

Novemb. 19.

1679.

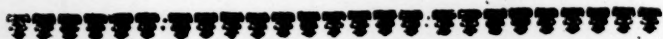
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*A True*



# ERRATA.

**P**age 8. line 1. for *Angel* read *Angels*. p. 16. l. 12. for *suffi-*  
*ent* r. *sufficient*. p. 27. l. 13. r. *in which*. p. 34. l. 21. r. *sent*  
*for*. p. 38. l. 11. for *Is is* r. *Is it*. p. 43. l. 6. for *on* r. *of*. l. 7.  
for *of* r. *on*. p. 58. l. 4. for *causeth* r. *cureth*. p. 61. l. 12. for  
*wilk* r. *would*. p. 62. l. 14. for *received* r. *refused*.



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# True Believer's

CHOICE and PLEASURE, &c.

P S A L. 119. III.

*Thy Testimonies have I taken for an heritage  
for ever ; for they are the rejoycing of my  
heart.*

**A** Text that speaketh of Rejoycing, and that in an heritage, and an heritage for ever, may seem unsuitable to a mournful Funeral: But it was chosen by our deceased friend, and not without justifiable reason. That which was a day of Sorrow to us, was a day of Rest and Joy to her ; and it was meet that she should foresee that Joy, and tasting it in the first-fruits, should commend that to us which she had found

found so sweet, and would bring us to the felicity which she hath now obtained. If the damned sensualist, *Luk. 16.* would have had one sent from another world, in hope to save his unbelieving Brethren, no wonder if a holy person were desirous that others should partake of her pleasure and inheritance: and like the Lepers that found the Siege of *Samarit* raised, would not feast and rejoyce alone. She chose this, no doubt, as that which was most lively imprinted on her own heart, with a just desire that it might be imprinted also on the hearts of others; that so we may not only rejoyce with her that now rejoyceth in the heavenly possession, but, as *Paul* saith, *Gal. 6. 4.* *Every man may prove his own works, and so may have rejoycing in himself alone, and not (only) in another.* Let us therefore by God's assistance so improve these words, as may conduce to this desired end.

By God's [*Testimonies*] here is meant that supernaturally revealed *Law* and *Promise*; which was possessed by the Church of the Jews, as God's peculiar people, supposing the Law of Nature, and the common mercies

cies which God had given to all the rest of fallen mankind : Both the Precepts and Promises are here included ; the Types and their signification of the thing typified.

[ *I have taken them* ] signifieth, I have believed them, implying that God revealed them ; and I have Accepted them, implying, that God had Offered them ; and *I have chosen them*, implying the preferring them before all competitors ; and *I have trusted them*, as signifying their special use, for the guiding, stablishing, quieting, and saving of the soul.

[ *For an heritage* ] signifieth

1. As that which I trust to as my security for an heavenly Inheritance.

2. And as that which now is my best portion while I am in the way, (including the things connoted.)

3. And as that which I prefer before all Wealth and worldly Heritage. *Alexander and Cæsar* had larger Dominions than *David* ; but neither of them was King of God's peculiar People, that had possession of his Oracles, nor had the Promises which he had, that Christ should be his

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Son

Son and Successor on his Throne.

The word [*for ever*] relateth both to the *Inheritance as everlasting*, and also to *David's choice*, as immutably hereupon determined.

They are said to be the *Rejoycing of the heart aptitudinally* in themselves, which caused him to choose them, and *actually*, because he had chosen, believed, loved, and obeyed them.

So that this is the sum of the sense [*worldly men make choice of a worldly Inheritance, and hopes, and on this they trust; and in this they seek their chiefest pleasure: But I, though blessed largely with thy bounty, have suffered many afflictions in the world: But thy Word hath been my Guide, and thy Promises still fulfilled to me; and experience hath confirmed my Faith and Resolution, to lay all my Hope upon thy Word or Covenant, both for this life, and that to come, and from it I seek and fetch my comfort: It hath been my joy in all my sorrows, and in it to the last will I rejoyce*] This is the sense of the Text, from which we are all taught.

Doct.

Doct. *That God's Covenant or Testimonies are the true Believers Heritage for ever, and as such are trusted and chosen by him; and therefore among all the allurements and the crosses of this world, are the support and rejoycing of his heart.*

In the handling this I shall shew you

I. *What it is in God's Testimonies* which make them fit to be our Heritage, and our Joy?

II. How they are called an *Heritage* for ever?

III. How they are so *taken* by Believers?

IV. How far they are their Joy?

I. In God's Covenant or Testimonies there is 1. The Author. 2. The Mediator. 3. The applying Agent. 4. The ascertaining Revelation. 5. The Donative or Benefit given. 6. The Guiding Doctrine and Law. 7. And the Persons or Subjects connoted to whom all this is suited, to be an Heritage for ever, and the rejoycing of their hearts.

1. The Author is God, the Lord of us

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and

and all ; in whose hand and will is our Soul and Body, our Life and Death, our Health and Sicknes, our Joy and Sorrow, whose loving-kindness is life, and better than life, *Psal. 63. 3.* who, if he will can make us whole and happy, and who hath told us what he *will* do by his Covenant : He wanteth not Love, for he is *Love* it self ; Essential, Infinite *Selflove*, communicating to his creatures such Love as his Wisdom seeth meet for them to receive. The Love that gave us the Mediator and the Covenant, will certainly perform it : It was of mercy that he *promised* : It is now of mercy and justice that he perform it. He wanteth not Wisdom to Rule the world by Truth and Goodness, and needeth not *deceit* and *falsehood hereunto*, nor to flatter such worms as we into obedience. Nor doth he that maintaineth Heaven and Earth, want *power* to make good all his Word ; nor is there any adverse power to make it difficult, and hazard the success. Indeed, he that seriously considereth the Divine Perfection, will think it were more strange and incredible, that God should not bless and glorifie the faithful,



faithful, according to his Word. If it be credible that the Sun sends forth its illuminating and enlivening beams so far and wide, to so many millions of various creatures (though it scorch the unsuitable objects that are too near;) it is credible that God who is Infinite Goodness, should bless the capable with heavenly Glory! And did we not see that sin maketh many incapable, it would be harder to reason to believe that all shall not be blessed by such a God, than that all the faithful shall be blessed. And we find, that though both be hard to unbelievers, they are of the two more hardly brought to believe the Threatnings, than the Promises of God. What wonder is it that Infinite *Power*, *Wisdom* and *Love*, should make some of his creatures blessed by communication? and *Mm* in special when he hath made him capable of it?

And what greater satisfaction and security can a fearful, troubled, dying man have than the Infallible word of the most glorious God. Sure he that firmly believeth it to be his Word, can hardly choose but believe that it is true, and meet for our most quieting trust.

2. The

2. The Angel and *Moses* were the Mediators of the Jewish Law : But the Eternal Word incarnate is the Mediator of the New Covenant; promised only before (to *Abraham, David, &c.* yea to *Adam*) but sent when made man in the fulness of time, *Gal.*

4. 4. And it must needs be a sure and excellent Covenant which is made and confirmed by such a Mediator, named in the Prophecy, *Isa. 9. 6. Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, of the increase of whose Government and Peace there is no end: he is the heir of all things by whom the Worlds were made; the Brightness of God's Glory; the express Image of his Person; and upholding all things by the word of his power; made better than Angels; having by Inheritance obtained a more excellent name; whom all the Angels of God do worship; and for whom they disdain not to minister to the Faithful.* It is a sure and comfortable Doctrine which must have such a Preacher sent from Heaven, and a certain Covenant which hath such a wonderful Mediator.

3. But it is not like the powerless word of man, but the *Holy Spirit* of the Father and  
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the Son undertaketh to accompany it, and as *the Arm of God* to set it home, and make it effectual to its proper ends : We have not only *heard* this word, but *felt* it : As we *hear* and *feel* the powerful Winds, though we see them not, and perceive not whence they come, or whither they go : All have *felt* this who are born of the *Spirit*, *Joh. 3.8.* God spake not like man when he said, *Let there be light*, *Gen. 1.* And he teacheth not like man, when his *Spirit* by his *Word* doth quicken, illuminate and regenerate Souls. It is a *sure Covenant* that hath such an *inward Mediator*, such an *Agent*, and *Advocate*, and *Witness* of Christ, speaking operatively from God to man, and speaking prevailingly in man to God.

4. And the sure manner of Revelation doth make it fit to be our *Trust* and *Joy*. As it beareth on it self the Image or Impress of *God's Power*, *Wisdom* and *Goodness* ; so by *powerful Miracles*, and manifold *Wisdom*, and unmeasurable *Goodness* it hath been delivered, sealed, defended and propagated : And by a *communicated Spirit* of *Life*, *Light*, and *Love* in all sound Believers, confirmed to this day.

5. And

5. And what is it that with such *glory* and *certainty* is delivered to us from *Heaven*? It is a Deed of *Gift* (thus sealed by *Christ's Blood* and *Spirit*) of *Grace* and *Glory*; of *Christ* to be our Head, and Lord, and Husband, and Life, in and with him. *John* 5. 10, 12. of the free pardon of all our sins how many and great soever, and of reconciliation with *God*, and of justification by the *blood* and *righteousness* of our Redeemer, and of the continued teaching, preserving, sanctifying, strengthening, comforting aid of the Holy Spirit; of adoption and title to the *Heavenly Inheritance*; that being Sons, and having the Spirit of the Son, by it we shall be sealed up to *Glory*, and be made the Habitation and *Temples* of *God*: In a word, it is a *promise of this Life*, so far as that *all things shall work together for our good*, *Rom.* 8. 28. and of the *life which is to come*, where we shall live in *Glory* with *Christ* for ever. This is the sure and blessed Covenant of *God*.

6. And what is the *Doctrine* and *Laws* of *God*, are they not also suited to our *Trust* and *Joy*? Is it not a delightful thing to read that

that which no meer man could tell us? How *God* made *Man* and all the *World*, and what *Laws* he gave him? How sin came into the world, and death by sin? How *God* hath governed the *World* from the beginning, and how he hath redeemed us? What *Christ* is, and what he hath done, and what he will do? And what *man* is, and what he *should be*, and what he *shall be*, and *do*, and *have* for ever.

And what is there in *God's Laws*, but that which is our *safety*, and *should be* our *joy*? If *good Laws* be the safety and honour of *Kingdoms*, are not *God's Laws* so to all the *World*? What an ugly *Dungeon* were the *World* without them? and what a worse than brutish thing were man? O how happy were *Man*, were *Families*, were *Cities*, were *Kingdoms*, if all had made *God's Laws* their *Rule*, and all *Mens Laws* and *Lives* had been ruled by them? Then there would have been none but *wise*, *just*, and *holy Rulers*, that would have governed for *God*, and for the common good, and *Princes* would have been indeed the *Fathers* of their *Countries*, and *Masters* of their *Families*, abhorring all contradicting selfish Interests, and  
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all Injustice, Tyranny, and Oppression. Then Subjects would have with *reverence, realness,* and *fidelity*, obeyed God, in obeying and honouring their Parents, Princes and Masters. Then all men would love their Neighbours as themselves, and do as they would be done by; *Love* and *Justice* would reign among all, and *Injury*, *Partiality* and *Selishness* would be abhorred. And which of us cannot say, Had I been ruled by *God's Laws*, I had escaped all the guilt, the shame, the corrections, the terrours that have befallen me? It is our sin against that sacred Rule, which is the cause of all our sorrows; else what Peace might we have had in our *Consciences*, in our *Bodies*, in our *Houses*, in our *Cities* and *Countrey*, as having Peace with God. God's strictest Laws, are but his strict forbidding us to destroy or hurt our selves and others, as you forbid fire and water, and Knives and Gunpowder, surfeit and poyson to your Children, for their preservation.

O how glad would every true Christian be, if God's Laws were fuller written on his heart, and he could but be and do all that God therein commandeth. For want of  
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this perfect Conformity it is, that he cryeth out with *Paul*, Rom. 7. *To will is present with me, but to do I find not---O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death.*

How joyful should we be if we could but trust God, and love him, and obey him, and be free from sin, as much as the Law of God commandeth us? We testify therefore that the Law is holy, and just, and good, while we repent that we break it, and wish that we could better keep it: For this would keep our Souls from guilt and shame, and terrors, and our bodies from much calamity and pain; all Gods ways are pleasantness, and all his paths are peace. Great peace have they that love his Law, and nothing shall offend them; let *Papists* hide it, and accuse it, and let the ignorant and malignant scorn it, yet will Believers judge it fit for their confidence and delight.

7. And the rather, because that all this is admirably suited to our necessity. We are undone sinners! and had perished for ever, without a Saviour, and a pardoning Covenant. We are dark and foolish, and should



have erred to Damnation, without this sure and heavenly guide? We are beset with *Temptations*, and how should we overcome them, without *God's promise* of better things than this World can give us? We are under manifold pains and sorrows, and must shortly dye: And how should we undergo all this in peace, if we had not hopes of future happiness, and of that which will compensate all our losses? We have a life of service to God, which must be *faithfully* and *cheerfully* done; and *how* should we so do it, without good persuasion of this reward? *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

O then what a joyful Word should that be to us, which is sent from God himself thus to guide, to secure, to strengthen and comfort us, by the promise of all that we need, and can well desire, sealed by the *Blood*, *Miracles*, and *Spirit* of Christ; and bearing the impress of *God the Author*; and that to such miserable Sinners as we are.

II. But



II. But how are *God's Testimonies* our Heritage for ever? When in Heaven vve shall have no need of Scriptures.

*Ans.* 1. [*For ever*] sometime signifieth, *to the end of my life*] as *David* saith, *Psal.* 23. *I shall dwell in the House of the Lord for ever*; and so oft. And so *Gods Testimonies* vvere taken for his Heritage, or chiefest Portion, and rejoycing constantly, and to his lives end, as securing him of an everlasting Heritage.

2. And the *Heritage* promised by them, and connoted, is *everlasting*; and the holiness imprinted by them on his Soul, vwill be perpetuated, and perfected in Heaven.

III. *What is it for Believers to take God's Testimonies for their Heritage?*

*Ans.* It is supposed that the flattering world, and the pleasures of the flesh, do stand here in competition, and are by many taken for *their best*, and this because they  
either

either *think not of*, or *believe* not the better things of a life to come, and the comforts of a holy prospect and preparation. In this case every true Believer, seriously weighing all, and what can be said on both sides, what the world and flesh will be and do for him, and what God and grace, and glory will be and do, doth wisely discern and resolve,

1. That the world is vanity, and sin abominable.

2. That God is all-sufficient, infinitely good, and to be trusted, and his word most wise, and just, and true: And therefore though his belief have its imperfections and assaults, yet he so far believeth Gods promises to be sure, and his precepts to be good and necessary, as that he resolveth here to place his hope and trust for his whole felicity in this life and hereafter, and to give up himself to the study, love, and obedience of Gods Laws, as the *guide and security, and comfort* of his Soul, renouncing all the flatteries of the flesh and world which stand against it, and are preferred by sensual Unbelievers.

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In few words, this was *Dauids* faith and choice, and this is the faith and choice of all true Believers, by which we may discern whether we are such; though all have not the *same degree* of trust and fixed resolution, yet all have this much in sincerity.

IV. Quest. *But can all say, They are the Rejoycing of my heart?*

Ans. All of them can say,

1. We see that there is in the Word and Covenant of God in Christ, unspeakably more *matter fit to be our Joy*, than in all the pleasures, and wealth, and honours of this world.

2. And therefore we prefer it before them all, in our *desire* and our *fixed choice*.

3. And we find so much *goodness and suitability* to us in this sacred Word, as that we *love it* as our *food* and our *security*, though not with the appetite and love which we desire.

4. And though we have not that joy in this our love to it, and in the hopes of promised

nased glory, which a *stronger faith and love* would cause, yet we find that it is our *best*, and we perceive more good in it than in sinful pleasures; and the true and chief support of our Souls in all our fears and troubles, and in our prospect of another life, is from the love and Word of God through Christ.

And though our pleasure in it be not sensual and luscious, it is much more solid and satisfying to our Souls, than we find in any other thing.

And the sweetness which we taste in it, is greater at some times than at other.

And the comfort which we have in our bodily health and welfare, is much as it signifieth to us the love of God performing to us his promises, and helping us to serve him with joy and gladness, in order to everlasting joy.

This is the ordinary case of true believers; though extraordinarily; 1. Some tempted, troubled, melancholy Christians overwhelmed with grief and fears, do not perceive this much in themselves. 2. And the healthfuller stronger sort of Christians have yet a more sweet

sweet and constant pleasure, in the Testimonies and Ways of God.

Having said this much for *Explication*, a little more may suffice to shew you *why* and *whence* it is that *Believers* receive the Testimonies of God with this fixed *Choice*, and *Trust*, and *Pleasure*.

1. It is from *honest Self Love* and *Interest*: They certainly find that it is *their best*; that it is *true* and *good*, and that there is nothing else to be found in this World, that will serve instead of it, to be a quieting security, guide and comfort to the Soul. They perceive what *they need*; and that nothing else can supply those needs: This must be their *Hope*, or they must despair.

2. It is from *Holy Suitableness* and *Love* to God, and the goodness which they relish in his Word. As God giveth every living Creature an *Appetite* suitable to his Food, and Benefits, so doth he to the *New Creature*. *Holiness* is mostly the Souls Appetite to God, and spiritual good. The word which promiseth and guideth us to the incorruptible Crown of glory, is an incorruptible seed, 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4, 5, 6. and it is our Milk or Food,

1 Pet. 2. 2. and by it we are made Partakers of the *divine nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. and it is the *ingrafted or innaturalized word which is able to save our Souls*, Jam. 1. 21. And as the whole stock is marvellously turned to serve a little *graft*, which is planted into it, and as if it had lost its former kind, doth bring forth only the fruit of the graft, so is God's Word implanted in us to the change of our nature, and our *fruits*. And it is no sound Appetite which hath no pleasure. No wonder if a strong belief do cause us to *rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, that we may receive the end of our faith, our salvation*, 1 Pet. 1. 6, 7, 8.

All God's *Commands and Promises* have by the divine impression of them on our souls, left somewhat there which is like them, and connatural; even a *holy light* to understand their truth and goodness, and a *holy love* to them, and the things revealed, to *desire them*, and *take pleasure* in them, and a *holy liveliness* to pursue the good desired. And this is the writing of the *Law and Gospel* on our hearts: And in this sense it may be said that God, that Christ, that the *Holy Ghost* is in our souls, and dwelleth in us, even as an *efficient principle*,  
and

and a beloved Object, and desired end. And if this be all that they intend, those called *Quakers* have no reason to accuse us, for not preaching a *God*, and a *Christ* within us. And if this be it that is meant by those who tell the *World*, that by saying that the *Holy Ghost* is in us, we are more arrogant than the Pope, that claimeth a visible Monarchy; we glory in this joyful privilege, this earnest, seal and first-fruits of heavenly glory, and humbly thank him who hath vouchsafed it, and assured us of it in his word, *Rom. 8. 9, 11. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Ephes. 3. 17. 1 John 4. 13. 1 Cor. 3. 16. 2 Tim. 1. 14. 1 John 3. 24. & 4. 12, 15, 16.* And if the Scorners have any belief of the Scriptures, let them read and tremble, *Rom. 8. 9. If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, the same is none of his.*

III. I have given you the sense and the reason of this Doctrine: We come hither to learn what use to make of it. And I think if I preach also on the *Copy* or *Impress* of this Text, whose Reliques we have laid in the dust, and tell us *what use* *she* made of such Doctrine, it will be a considerable help to our own Application.

## A Funeral Sermon.

I have never loved or used to adorn Sepulchers, or hang out specious Signs at the doors of Pride, Ambition, Tyranny, or worldliness, to entice others to imitate prosperous sinners in their sin: were I to preach at the Funerals of an *Alexander*, or a *Cæsar*, I had rather say that which may save the living from following them in Pride and Bloodshed, than to tempt men to the like sin and misery.

- To praise damned men, because they had the pleasures of sin for a season, is to be more foolish and uncharitable, than the tormented Gentleman, *Luk 16.* who would have had one sent from the dead to warn his Brethren, lest they should follow him to that place of torment, by preferring fleshly pleasure and prosperity, before the life and hope of Saints. Our praises ease not tormented souls. It is a mark of the Citizens of the holy City, *That a vile person is condemned in their eyes?* but withall, *That they honour those that fear the Lord: for God doth honour them.*

My duty therefore to God, and my love to holiness, and holy persons, and to you  
in



in special that are her Children, and other Relations, commandeth me to tell you, (though some of you know it better than I) That our deceased Friend, in the course of her Pilgrimage, did speak of her self by her constant practice, what *David* professed in this Text. Though I speak but from eighteen or nineteen years acquaintance with her my self, I have full evidence of it for the former part of her life. And my acquaintance with her by Neighbourhood, and mutual esteem, hath been such as hath given me more advantage to know her than most have had: though I remember not ever to have *spoken with one person that hath known her, that did not take her for an extraordinary and eminent example of the Piety and Virtues which I shall mention.*

If the Hypocrites seek the praise of men, verily they have their reward (a poor reward) but she seeking first the Kingdom of God, and the honour that is of him, had this cast in as overplus: I never heard that any person of any perswasion did speak evil of her, or question her eminent sincerity and worth.

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Had she come to this by *sinful compliance*, She might have feared Christs words, *Luke 6. 26. Wo to you when all men speak well of you.* But as God hath not left himself without Witnesses to the very Heathens, so he hath not left innocency, wisdom, love, peace and piety, without some Witnesses in the Consciences of the ungodly; few of them have the face to speak against these in their proper names: And if he could not dishonour them by our mixed faults, and by the slanderous affixed names of Heresie, Schism, Disobedience, Hypocrisie, Phanaticism, Folly, and what else ignorance and malignity can devise, the Devil knew not how to dishonour Holiness and Vertue, nor to encourage the blind world to so common a hatred and opposition of them, as they shew in all Nations of the Earth.

When She chose this Text, it was from such a futable spirit, as all men choose the food, the friends and company, the business and discourse which by agreeableness they most delight in. That She made Gods Word and Covenants, (connoting Gods Love, Christ, Grace and Glory, the spring, matter,

matter and end) her best, her heritage, her all, contemning all that stood in competition; and that these were the rejoycing of her heart, She shewed to us that knew Her by these notable effects.

I. By her constant, serious, diligent use of the Word of God, by hearing, reading, conference and meditation. Her food was not more constantly used, nor I believe so sweet to her. Her hearing in the publick Assemblies, nothing but necessity could interrupt: And her private constancy her relations know. She practically told us that the blessed mans *delight is in the Law of the Lord, and therein doth he meditate day and night*, Psal. 1. 2.

II. She *made so much*, (in esteem, use and thankfulness) of *every little* of the help She could get in these spiritual things, as shewed that they were her heritage and joy. When some come home with *accusations* of the Sermon, as *dry, dull, or weak*, She found in it something for profit and solace: I am sure my own conversation and duties have  
been

been truly guilty of the forefaid faults, and yet how gladly would She come over the way to us at prayer time. How much did She value now and then a little (too dull unprofitable) conference, and took it for a loss that She could have no more. How glad was she of now and then a too dry and fhort Letter, and how carefully would she keep them. As if with the Woman of *Canaan*, She had been begging for the crumbs. Alas our duller appetites feldom fo desire after, or delight in, much larger portions of well-drest food but fulnefs hath loathing, and we call it *dry manna*, which we are weary of; or every little fault in the dressing turneth our stomach againft it; full fouls loath the honey-comb, but to the hungry every bitter thing is fweet.

III. She loved and received the Word of God from *any faithful Minister that brought it*: Its true that She *more frequented and desired* fome than others: But her Religion was not Faction, or fiding with this Party or with that: She was far from a Shifmatical mind or practice. When one Party separates

rates from all that Preach in the Parish Churches, and another from all that Preach elsewhere, She separated from neither.

IV. Accordingly She loved all persons that feared God, as such: Not confining her Affections or Kindness to those of this or that controvertible Opinion: But that candour and holy simplicity, and serious practical Religion which She had her self, was it that She loved in all others whomsoever.

V. And accordingly her *conference* was not about *controversies*, or matters of contention, which too many spend their hours in these times, but that which tendeth to edification, and to administer grace to the hearers: She was not such as *Paul* oft reproveth for *striving about words*, and little things, that tend not to edifie but subvert.

VI. Much less was She tainted with any Heresie, or dangerous Errour in Religion, nor ever drawn from the truth, and her spiritual steadfastness; but cleaved to the form of wholsom words, and the simplici-

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ty that is in Christ, and to them that held the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; avoiding the vain janglings of men of Contention, Pride and Corrupt minds.

VII. She was not of a censorious back-biting temper, nor used, as too many faulty Christians, to make it her discourse, to find fault with others, and make her self the judge of Controversies, Cases, Actions and Persons which she understood not: but had learned that lesson, [*speak evil of no man,*] and to *know* and *be called* to it, before she *judged*.

VIII. She was very desirous of the good of all, and glad of any thing which tended to promote the conversion and saving of mens souls.

IX. She was charitable and liberal also to their bodies; in an unusual degree; as I am able to say by particular experience, in which I have known it exercised to the poor.

X. Her

X. Her humility and detestation of pride was manifest, not only in her Garb and Behaviour, but in her low thoughts of her self, and the lowliness of all her Conversation, and great dislike of all that favoured of Pride.

XI. She was not morose, nor a refuser of Converse or useful Visits, when reason required them : but She took it for a great Affliction to have much diversion by company or by matters, from her constant course of better work : And (besides her health) was therefore the more Inclined to be much in the Country, that her mind and time might not be at the Mercy of too much intruding diversions, and unprofitable discourse.

XII. Much more was *She* averse to all sorts of *sensuality* : such pleasing of the flesh as corrupteth the mind, and turneth it from holy work and pleasure ; and such vain recreations as waste precious time, and profit not our selves or others : Holy things were her food and feast, her work and recreation.

XIII. Her *prudence* in all matters was very exemplary ; being much more against unadvised rashness, and actions which tend to ill effects, than most of us of the stronger Sex : and I confess I should think much better of my self if I could equal her herein. In which her Acquaintance commonly admired her, though this is a point which all must acknowledge much imperfection in.

XIV. And her gentleness, meekness and calmness of mind and carriage was very amiable to her friends and most that did converse with her : She was a great Adversary to passionate behaviour, which surely came from that Power of Grace, which had made love and meekness become a nature in her, seeing no such thing could be else expected in one of her Sex and Complexion, and bodily weaknesses.

XV. *She* did not, as the Hypocrite, give God the second place in her heart and life, and the World the first, nor put off Christ with the leavings of the flesh, nor take this  
World



World for her best or heritage, and the next only for a reserve when she must needs leave this: *She* seemed to prize no Heritage but God, nor to set much by any transitory vanity whatever.

XVI. *She* excelled in the earnest desire of her Childrens good, and in the care of their well-doing and salvation. How oft hath she desired me to pray for them? How glad was she if I would at any time but converse with them, and advise them: they know better themselves (though I know much,) how much she prayed for them? How oft and tenderly she counselled them? What Letters of serious holy Counsel she would write to them? And how like she was to *Job*, who prayed and sacrificed for his Children, when they were merry and feasting together, fearing lest they should forget God and sin against him?

XVII. This kind of life which I have described was *her calling and trade*, and in a manner her *only business in the World*: It was not now and then in a good mood, like a Feast or Recreation: but as she knew that

*one thing is needful*, so she chose that better part, which never was, nor will be taken from her. She so lived as if she had but *this one thing to mind and do in the world*, to please God by obeying him, and to cleave to Christ, and to do good, and to be saved. Nothing else seemed to be much in her mind, thoughts, care, and business; her *life* seemed to be but *this one thing*. But I must confess that poor and tempted Persons, that are under many worldly wants, crosses and employments, cannot be expected to reach her measure in this: Though *one thing* be their *best and portion*, they may be tost with many troublesome cares and businesses. But God gave her both *mind, opportunity and help* to live in as even a course of constant holiness in a Family, as Monks can pretend to or hope for in their Community or solitude. Religion was her very life.

XVIII. In this life she had also a *Constant peace of Conscience*, bewailing her *imperfections*, but not living in melancholy, despair, hard thoughts of God, or an uncomfortable sort of Religion: I have oft  
heard

heard her speak of her lamented weakness of Faith, Love, and heavenly desires and joy, but never, that *I* remember, one doubting word of her own sincerity and salvation: But her ordinary speech was lamenting that we were all so weak in our belief of the Word of God, and the unseen World, and what excellent Persons we should be if herein we had a stronger Faith that were like unto fight; and how much it should be the business of all believers, to pray and labour for an increased powerful belief hereof, as that which would set all right in us

XIX. Her patience under her bodily infirmities also was exemplary. Her weakness made her so lyable to dangerous Coughs while she was in *London* air, that by this she was constrained to live much from home. And most of all her life she was tormented with a frequent head-ach? But in her patience in all this She did possess her Soul; and patience furthered experience, and experience hope, and she learnt more the quiet fruits of righteousness by being much exercised herein.

XX. And

XX. And as by this She daily learned to dye, so the expectation and preparation for death, was her continual work and state. She lived and heard, and prayed, and wrote her Letters to her Children as at the brink of the Grave, and the Door of Eternity. Not that her Diseases did seem to us to be very mortal, or threaten this sudden change. But she knew the brevity of mans life, and that Death is ready to remove us all, and what a moment it is till that certain hour.

And as she lived holily, and in peace with God and man, so she dyed with *ease* and *little likelyhood* of the ordinary miseries of *Fear* or *Pain*: A little forenens and swelling of her Leg, and pain towards the Hip, turned to two swooning fits, and in the third or fourth, having been in quiet discourse with her Husband, she as quietly sunk and dyed away; desiring that I should be sent to pray with her; she was dead before *I* came, without any signs of nature striving: And she had said to her Daughter after her former fits, she did not think that one could have dyed

died so easily as she had almost done. A death *thus expected*, and *thus prepared for* is not to be called *sudden*! Thus God can make death easie to some of us, that are apt to over-fear the antecedent pain. And now what can be more, (almost) desired *in this World*, than such a life and such a death. Our dear Friend is at home with Christ, and Gods will, which is Goodness and Love it self, is so fulfilled; even that will which must dispose of all things, and in which only we must seek our rest.

And having described this true Copy of the Text, I may boldly speak of it to several sorts.

I. I may again ask both *Quakers and Scorners*, Whether the *Holy Spirit* do not *dwell and work* in such among us, as our dear Friend now deceased was?

II. I may ask *Unbelievers and Sadduces*, Whether these operations of the spirit of God on Believers, be not a sign that God owneth the Gospel by which he thus worketh? And that Christ liveth and reigneth, who can thus still send a sanctifying Spirit into

Believers Souls? And whether it be not blasphemy to think and say, either that these excellent endowments of Souls are not of God, or that he giveth them all in vain, and that Believers are all deceived by God, and labour and hope all their days for that which hath no being; and that the *better* God maketh them, the more *deluded*, *vain* and *frustrate* he maketh them, and ruleth and amendeth the world by *falsehood*.

III. I may ask the *Papists*, with what Face they can say as they use to do, *That they never heard of a Protestant Saint?* And whether we may not be as *Religious* in the places that God hath set us in, as if we turned *Recluses*, Monks or Nuns, and shut up our selves from doing any good in the world.

IV. I may ask the *Malignant* that call all serious Godliness *Hypocrisie*, whether such a life as this doth favour of dissimulation? And whether such *Seriousness* and *Hypocrisie* are not contraries, and *Hypocrisie* be not a *Profession* without that *Seriousness* which is sincerity? And whether they that in Baptism

tism solemnly vow to take God for their God, and Christ for their Lord and Saviour, and the Holy Ghost for Christs Advocate and Witness, and their Sanctifier and Comforter, and to renounce the Flesh, the World and the Devil, and when they have done, perform none of this which they vowed, but live to the Flesh and World which they renounced, and take a holy life as needles, yea and hate it; I say, whether these be not the impudent Hypocrites that vow and profess that holiness which they abhor, rather than they that with all their diligence perform the holy Vow which they have made. And if Wives promise Fidelity to their Husbands, Servants to their Masters, and Subjects to their Princes, are they the Hypocrites that are serious and keep their promise? Or they that were never serious in it, but scorn the keeping of it?

V. And as to those malignant persons that take this strict and serious diligence for mens souls, to be but *scrupulosity*, or the Character of some *over-zealous Bigots or Puritans* who are most inclined to Schism, and to

be troublefom or dangerous to States; I ask them,

1. What is there in all the description which I have here truly given you, which is injurious or dangerous to Church or State, or any person? Will it hurt any one that God and men are seriously loved? and that *God's Testimonies* are trusted and delighted in and obeyed? and that *God's Kingdom* and *Righteousness* is first fought?

2. It is not Christ, and Christianity, and Scripture that you accuse? If it be schismatical and dangerous to be serious in performing what we profess and vow, surely it is bad in Baptism to vow it, and still by calling our selves Christians to profess it? To accuse, hate and scorn the serious Practice of your own profest Religion, is to be the most foolish self-condemners, and in some respects worse than Mahometans, Infidels, and Heathens.

VI. But my most earnest desire is to you the *loving Husband*, and *beloved Children* of our departed Friend; that you will not overlook,

1. The



1. The *Correction*,
2. The *Sin*,
3. The *Mercy*,
4. Or the *Duty* which God now call-  
eth you seriously to consider.

(1.) I need not persuade such as are rather apt to over much *sorrow*, not to *despise* this chastening of the Lord, but rather not to faint under his rebuke. But I cannot dissuade you from a just sense of your loss, we that are your *Neighbours* feel it ; but you much more, to whom it is much greater : what *Saints* in *Heaven* do *know* of us, or *think* of us, or *do* for us, we shall better *know* when we are there : But *here* you are deprived of the daily prayers which She sent up for you ; of the continuance of her loving care of your souls, and watchfulness over you ; of her wise and faithful counsels to you, and of her imitable example, as it was still before you ; a Husband of a pious prudent helper, and Children of a tender affectionate Mother ; your great *sorrows* tell me you feel your loss.

(2.) And

(2.) And all *correction* is for *sin*, which is worse than suffering; O fall down before God, and with penitent tears bewail your sin, which hath caused your loss: humbly confess how unworthy you were of such a Mother, and beg of God to forgive that sin.

(3.) But *Mercy* also as well as *Sin* and *Loss* must be acknowledged. Your sorrow must give due place to *thankfulness* and *comfort*. Your Mother is taken from you, but remember.

1. What a mercy it was and is to you, that you are so *related* to such Parents, seeing God hath promised special mercy to the Faithful and their Seed; and if any of you miss it, it will be through your own ingratitude and contempt.

2. What a mercy is it that all her prayers for you are yet in force, and more of the answer of them may yet be sent you, if you reject it not?

3. You have yet all her holy counsels to remember, and they may profit you while you live.

4. And

4. And though She be gone, I hope her example will never be forgotten by you.

5. And what a mercy is it, that under all her infirmities, you enjoyed her so long?

6. And yet how much greater cause of thankfulness have you, that she so lived and so dyed, and that you may think of her with comfort, as being with Christ, and hope to be with her for ever. Every one hath had a *Mother*, but every one had not *such a Mother* as you have had.

(4) And I have intimated your *Duty*, while I have mentioned your *Loss* and *Mercy*.

1. Think over often what Sin she reprov-  
ed in you, and what counsel she gave you,  
and now revive your resolution to obey  
it.

2. Remember what she was wont to pray  
for on your behalf; and let it not now be  
long of your neglect or wilfulness, that you  
are without it.

3. Remember her humble, moderate,  
holy example; and think whether your  
Souls

Souls have not as much need of the greatest care and diligence as hers had? And why should not you be as studious to please God and make sure of Heaven as she was? Bless God that you have such a pattern, that hath so long dwelt with you for your imitation, next your imitation of Christ: Holy simplicity is despised by the world, but it will prove the only wisdom at the last.

I have told you what use to make of the example of our deceased Friend: Let me now tell you what use to make of the Text which she so much loved, transcribed, and chose.

I. And first here you may learn, the nature of true Faith, and sound Religion: It taketh Gods testimonies and promises for our heritage, and for the comfort of our hearts. It is not true Faith, unless we so trust Gods promises for this life and that to come, as to take what *he promiseth* for our *best* and our *inheritance*, and his *promise* for our best security and title, and his Law for our governing Rule that we may obtain it.

So

So that, 1. Here you see how we differ from *Infidels*, that do not *trust* their everlasting hopes and happiness on the promise of God.

2. And how we differ from hypocrites who speak best on Heaven, but really look for their best of earth: which Christ calleth [*Trusting in their Riches,*] because that is indeed their trust, from which they have their greatest expectations, and for which they most labour and will leave all; this a believer doth for *promised* happiness: And this the worldly hypocrite doth for the prosperity of the flesh on Earth.

3. And here you see that faith and godliness are not melancholy uncomfortable things, as the Devil and the flesh would persuade unexperienced fools and unbelievers: Unless it be sad to have security from God of a Heavenly heritage, and rejoice therein.

And here you see the differences between the mirth of a fleshly infidel and of a believing Saint: One is like a drunkard that is merry for an hour in a brutish kind of befooling pleasure; or like one that hath a pleasant dream; or one that heareth a jeast

or merry tale, or seetha pretty Comedy or shew : The other is more rational and heart-contenting than it should be to any one of you, to have good security for many hundred years life and health and prosperity here on Earth ; such a birth-right do prophane fools sell for such a morsel ; not knowing that the fear of God caused by true Faith is the beginning of Wisdom.

2. Hence therefore we may learn how to try our sincerity of Faith. Doth it make us take Gods promise and the thing promised as our heritage ? Though we are not without Temptations to doubting, nay nor without the remnants of unbelief, but our hearts are troubled when we look beyond death with many fears, yet if we so far trust Gods Word, as resolvedly to take it for that which we will adhere to, and lay our chiefest hopes upon, we have a faith that will entitle us to the promised benefits.

*Obj.* But some may say, I cannot say that it is the *Rejoycing of my heart.*

*Ans.* 1. Can you say that you take it for that in which you place and seek your joy, though

though you cannot yet attain it? And that you prefer not *any other pleasure* in your *esteem* and *choice* and *seeking*? If so, you shew that you truly believe and trust to the faithfulness of *God's Word*, though yet you reach not what you seek. Desire is the first-fruit of *Faith* and *Love*, and holy joy is the *flower* and *perfection*.

2. Cannot you say that it is *this Word* that maketh you hope that there is for man a better life, and that you shall not perish like the Beasts? And that your *fears* and *sorrows* are somewhat abated by the promises of God?

3. Cannot you say that you perceive a pleasing goodness in the Word of God, which maketh it welcome and acceptable to you?

By what I have mentioned, you may find,

1. That the Word hath not been in vain unto you, when it hath caused such effects.

2. And that the same spirit is in you which wrote the Word; or else you would not love and desire it, and take it for suitable food and pleasure, yea, your heritage and joy.

3. And you may hence perceive that you are not without the love of God himself, though you see him not, and have not such sensible conceptions of him as you have of men and things which you have seen: For if you love truth and goodness and holiness in Gods Word, because it is such, you sure love best the *greatest* truth, goodness and holiness, and that is God.

4. And hence you may perceive that though our nature love not death, and a weak faith will not overcome all fears, when we think of coming into an unseen world, yet really you are lovers of Heaven, in that you are lovers of that which constituteth Heaven, and is its desirableness to man; even *holiness* and Gods Love and glorious presence, and our perpetual joy herein. If you desire this you desire Heaven, though the fear of death do make you doubt of it.

5. And hence you may find that you are not Worldly Hypocrites? else it is not Gods Promises, and Law, that you would take for your heritage and joy; but worldly prosperity and fleshly pleasure, and *God* and *Heaven* should have but the leavings of the flesh,  
for



for fear of an after reckoning at death.

6. And though your joy be finall, you may know that it is of the right kind, when it is chiefly fought in *God's Love and Promises*; and you would not let go the word of *God*, and lose your part in it for all the vanities of this World.

III. Hence also you may learn why all *true Christians* so much value the Testimonies or Word of *God*? Why they so much read it, think of it, talk of it, and hear of it; and are loath that *Papists* should corrupt it, or conceal it in an unknown Tongue; or that any should deny them the necessary use of it, or silence the Ministers that preach it to them? who would willingly be deprived of his heritage, or heart rejoycing?

IV. Yea, indeed hence we see, *how much we should set by it, and use it*, how dear it should be to us? How strictly we should obey it? With what delight we should read it and meditate in it? How diligent we should be to confirm our belief of it, and how we should fetch our hope and comfort from it, in life and at our death?

V. And

V. And You may see hence, that it is no wonder that the Devil and all his Servants in the World are Enemies to the Word of God. because they are Enemies to our heritage and joy : And there are few better signs while many pretend to be for Christ, to know who are really for him, and who are against him and his greatest Enemies ; than to judge of men as they further or hinder ; Love or Hate the Word of God as to its proper use, , as the heritage and joy of *holy souls*.

VI. But the chief part of *my application* is, to commend this *wise* and *holy choice*, and solid comfort to you all ; and to beseech you presently to imitate *David*, and turn away from all inconsistent pleasures. If *you* live in sorrow or deceit, and die in desperation, it is not for want of an offer from God of better things. Have *you* lived hitherto as thus resolved ? If *you* have, the Lord confirm *you*, and be sure such hopes shall not deceive *you*. If *you* have not, what will *you* now choose and do ? If *you* live not to some  
end,

end, you live not like men, according to reason. If you have chosen what end to live for and seek, what is it? Consider, I beseech you, of these things following before it be too late.

1. What will you take for your heritage, or your best, if not the future promised joyes, and what will you *take* for your *security* but Gods Word? What is it that you place your chiefest hopes in? shall health and wealth, and pleasure to the flesh, and honour among men, be taken for your heritage? Dare you under your hands make a Covenant for these to quit all your hopes of the life to come? if not, which is that you prefer, and which would you quit, if one must be hazarded or lost? which hath the nearest and highest place in your hearts? which seek you first, and make all other things give place to? O Sirs, it is a shame to our stupid hearts, that we have need to be so oft told by Preachers, that *we must dye*, and that our flesh must shortly lie neglected in dust and darknes, till the resurrection, and that we and all the deceitful trifles of this World are ready to part for ever! It is a shame that we  
must

must be oft told that which every Fool and Child at the use of reason may know, how poor and how short an heritage or pleasure all those have, who have no better than this World can give them.

What say you, Will you die in *Hope* or in *Despair*? If Unbelief make you hope that there is no Hell, yet *Hope* of *Heaven* you can have none, unless you trust the Word of God? The light of Nature indeed is such a natural Word or Revelation, as may tell us much of a future life of retribution; but Gods supernatural revelation is so much clearer, that we cannot expect that he will see by a lesser, who wilfully rejects a greater light: sure all men would live for ever if they could, and all would be for ever happy: you would not sure die like Dogs, without any hope of a better life hereafter, if you could have good security for such hopes? And what better security is there to be found, by mortal men, than (*the Promises of God, confirmed by Christs Blood and Miracles, and by the Seal of his holy Spirit.*)

In a word, without all doubt, *Either Heaven must be your Heritage, or you must have none that is worthy of a serious thought, and enough*

*nough to keep a man from wishing that he had never been born, or been a Brute, that had not reason to know the matter of his griefs and fears. And either Gods Word seconding the light of Nature, must give you hopes of a better life, or you must live and dye in meer despair. And shall that be your wilful choice?*

2. Consider how unvaluable a mercy it is, to man, yea, to sinful miserable man, that God should vouchsafe to give him such an everlasting Heritage, and such security for it, and that on the meere thankful acceptance of the sinner. And how worthily will they be undone, that by wilful refusal are deprived of freely offered Felicity?

3. And consider, how *suitable* an Heritage and Security it is that is offered us, and how fit for our joyful acceptance and esteem.

The thing promised is no less than endless glory with God our Redeemer, and all the blessed: it is in the world where we must be for ever! It is the perfection of that which every holy Soul desireth: It is *our*

H

*best*

*best, our all*; it must be that or nothing; that or Hell.

The Word or Covenant which is our Trust,

1. Is Gods own Word.
2. It perfecteth and secondeth natural revelation and hope.
3. It beareth on it self the impress of God, even his power, wisdom and love, in wonders, prophecies and grace, it is sealed by the blood of Christ; by his own and his Disciples multitude of miracles; and by the gift of his sanctifying Spirit to all true believers to the end: It is confirmed to our Souls by the experience of the Power of it, and the blessed effects, and this in-dwelling Spirit, the witness of Christ; and by the answer of prayers, by many providences, and by the experience of all Believers to this day.

It is excellently suited to all our needs; to our wants, our dangers, our fears, our doubts, yea, and our sinful unworthiness in the freeness of Gods mercy, and all his gifts.

Indeed man had rather live by sight, and  
would

would fain know by seeing, whither Souls go, and what they are, and have, and do hereafter. But it is not we, but *God* that is the Ruler, and fittest to choose both the gift and means, the end and way: If we thankfully trust and improve a promise, we shall quickly see, and have possession. Blessed be *God* for the light of his *Gospel*, to guide us up to the light of glory. O that we had hearts to trust it, love it, and rejoyce in it, as we have just cause.

4. And is it not a great mercy of *God*, that he hath herein called us *to a life of happiness and present joy*? If he had bid us only weep for sin to the last breath, the condition had been easie as for pardon and hope of endless mercy; but he hath given us a word, which he would have to be the *rejoycing of our hearts*; and do we not love joy? or have we any better?

I have not now time, and I much more want my self such a mind and heart as I should have, to tell what cause of daily joy *God* hath given us in his word and Covenants. But this I will tell you, that our want

of joy is our daily sin and shame, as well as our loss and suffering; and among all the discoveries of the sinful weaknels of our Faith, Hope and Love, our want of rejoycing in the word of promise, and hope of glory is not the less? O what an Enemy is Death in this respect, that standing between it, darkness and affrightneth us from our joys: But Christ hath conquered Death, to deliver those that through fear of it are subject to Bondage, *Heb. 2. 14.* And though we cry, O miserable men, who shall deliver us? we yet thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And I must second the Testimony of our deceased Friend, in professing for your encouragement, my own experience, I have taken *God's Testimonies* for my *Heritage*, and they have been these fifty Years, or near, the pleasure of my life, and sweeter than Honey, and preciouser than thousands of gold and silver. As we tell men in charity of the things which we have found good, the Medicines that have healed us, and commend the persons that have been friendly to us, and as man's nature is inclined to propagate the know-



knowledge, and communicate the good which we partake of, and grace increaseth this inclination; so I take it to be my duty, to add herein my own experience, if it may contribute to the determining of your choice: and reason teacheth all men to regard that means and remedy and good the more, which many have had experience of; and it is not to be taken for vain ostentation, to profess that which all must have in some degree that will be saved.

Though the natural and sinful fears of pain and death, too long deprived me of much of the joy which I should have had in the thoughts of the unseen world, and too much doth so to this day, yet I must say that the *Word of God*, and the *persons* that love and practice it, and the holy way of life and peace, and all the means and things that here favour of Heaven, have been so good and pleasant to me, as enableth me to assure you, that on earth there is nothing so worthy of your desire and joy.

And to encourage you, I will tell you by my own experience, what benefit may be expected from this kind of delight, agreeable

to

to *Dauids* and our Friends experience.

1. By this means my life hath been almost a constant pleasure.

2. This pleasure hath much upheld me under almost constant bodily infirmity and pain.

3. It hath made all my sufferings from men, and crosses in the world to be tolerable and very easie to me; had not Gods Word been my delight, I had lived uncomfortably, in constant pains and sorrows, and had perished in my trouble.

4. It hath saved me from the snares of sinful pleasures: mans nature will seek for some delight, and they that have it not in good-will, seek it in things hurtful and forbidden; it is only greater things that can overcome our mistaken choice of lesser. In my Childhood I was sinfully inclined to the pleasure of Romances, and of Childish Sports; but when I tasted the sweetnets of Gods Testimonies and Ways, I needed no other but spit out those luscious unwholesome Vanities. And though common knowledge, called Learning, be pleasant to mans nature, and I cannot say that I have not overvalued it,

yet I must say, that the relish of these greater matters, hath made me see how much of it is vanity, and hath saved me from the pursuit of that part of it which doth but please curiosity and fancy, and tendeth not to use and to greater things; and sensual pleasures I had no need of.

5. It hath by this means made that pleasure which I had, to be such as my reason did approve and justifie, whereas if I had sought it in preferment, wealth, or sensuality, a foreseeing Conscience would have afrighted me out of all my pleasure, and I should have had more of the pricks than of the Rose; of the sting, than of the Honey. Of this pleasure you need not fear too much; but of the sensual pleasure, we more easily catch a mortal surfeit

6. This sweetness of Gods Word, hath made also my *calling* and *daily labor* sweet; so that it had my heart, and not my forced hand and tongue.

7. And this hath helpt my *constancy* herein: For when we have no delight in our work, we grow weary; and weariness tendeth to give it over, or to do it heartlessly,  
and

and flubber it over in unacceptable hypocritie.

8. And this hath much saved me from the sinful loss of time : pleasure causeth trifling and delays ; who needeth vain pastimes, that delighteth in Gods Word and Work ?

9. And this hath been to me an excellent help for the increase of knowledge : For the myteries of godliness have still more to be learned by the wisest man ; and as Boys at School, so the Scholars of Christ, learn best who have most pleasure in their Books.

10. And this pleasure hath much confirmed my belief of the truth of Scripture, when it hath born its own witness to my mind, and I have tasted that goodness which is agreeable to its truth. I easily believe him that commendeth a thing to me, when I taste or feel that it is good.

11. And this pleasure hath helped me against vain thoughts and talk, while the truths of God were sweet, and so continually welcome ; it's easie to think of that which we delight in ; and sinful delights corrupt the thoughts and speech with constant sin.

12. And this pleasure hath somewhat fed my

my daily *thankfulness* to God, in the constant experience of the goodness of his truth and ways.

13. And it cured the error of my beginnings, when I strove for nothing so much as to weep for sin, and perceived not that the joy of the Lord is our strength, and the flower of holiness, and likest to the heavenly state; and that the Spirit sanctifieth, by making God and goodness pleasant to us.

14. And hereby it made me find, that the praises of God are the sweetest and noblest exercises of Religion; when before I placed more in lamenting sin and misery.

15. And this maketh many things needless to me, that else would seem needful; I want not more company; I want no recreation but for my body; if I have not what I would have, I see where only it is to be found.

16. And I am assured that the constant pleasure of my mind, hath not only kept me from melancholy, but from greater sicknesses, and tended to the lengthning of my life (as *Scaliger* saith, *Pleasant Studies* do.) For constant pleasure must needs tend to health.

I

17. And

17. And this taste hath made me long for more, and had I not felt that it is good to draw near to God, and very desirable to know him and his will, I should never have so earnestly beg'd for clearer light and more near and sweet communion with him; pleasure is the cause of strong desire.

18. It hath been one of my greatest helps against many temptations, of subtile enemies that tempt men to sadducism and doubt of the life to come.

19. It hath made me more communicative to others, for we would all have partakers in our delights.

20. And it hath greatly furthered my Repentance and hatred of sin, when I have tasted what pleasure it depriveth us of; and the abhorrence and loathing of my self that can delight in such a God and Saviour, and word no more: when I taste how good it is, and see so much reason to rejoice in it, and the hopes of Glory a thousand fold more than I do, none of all the actual sins of my life, do make me half so much loath my naughty heart, as to think that my want of greater joy in so great and near a good, doth

doth shew so much weakness in my Faith, and Hope, and Love! O that I had more Faith and Love that I might have more of this delight!

Hearers I have sincerely told you what comfort you may have if you will not refuse it from the Word of God, and from the experience of *David*, and (because things near are aptest to affect) from the experience of our deceased friend, and of my self, and indeed of all Gods Servants in their degree; you would live in joy; you will dye in joy; we need it in a life of so much trouble, and for a change that else is terrible; and its sure and near. O Sirs we need another kind of comfort, than sport or appetite, or wealth, or any such fading vanity will give us, you may have some of it, if you will. And though joy be the top of grace which we arrive not at with a with, nor in an hour, yet the nature of the new creature relisheth or savoureth the things of the Spirit, *Rom.* 8. 5, 6, 7. And the Spirit of Adoption is a Spirit of filial Love, and cryeth *Abba* Father, and the Love of God the Father, the Grace of the Son, and the Communion of the Holy

Spirit, which are the believers part, are all of them the greatest comforters; and Christ giveth believers that seek and trust him, that spring of living waters, which tendeth to everlasting satisfaction, and cureth indigent and sinful thirst.

Will you then have any portion, heritage and joy which will be worthy of a man, and shall go further with you than the Grave? If you will you may: God and this Congregation are witnesses that it was *offered* you. But think not to refuse it, and prefer the *transitory pleasures* of Sin before it, and at last have it, and find that which you received, or which you sought not first, *Mat. 6. 33.* nor to find a *Treasure* in *Heaven* where you never laid it up or sought it. The *hopes* of the *Wicked* perish, and the *Hypocrites hopes* are as the giving up of the *Ghost*: But the *Righteous* hath hope in his death, and therefore may dye in *Peace* and *Joy*, *Job 8. 13, 14.* and *11. 20. Prov. 11. 7. and 14. 32.*

Perhaps some will say, that such a discourse of rejoycing is unsuitable to the mourning of a *Funeral*. I think not of such a *Funeral*, in which we commemorate the  
*Holy*



*Holy Life* and *Death*, and believe the present and everlasting joy of such a *Friend*, and one with whom we have long joyned in seeking and waiting for that *Felicity*, and hope ere long and for ever to rejoice with Christ and her, and all the blessed. And *Funeral Sermons* are not for the benefit (though for the due honour) of the dead, but of the living, to teach us all to prepare for death, which indeed is so much of the business of our whole life, that all the rest is but a vain shew, and foolish trifling or much worse. And wherein doth our preparation for death so much consist, as fore-seeing what so great a change will need, and what a Tryal it will put our *Faith* and *Hope* to, to seek and get such security for our everlasting state, and such sound belief of it, and settled content and comfort in it, which the fears of *Death*, *Judgment*, and *Hell*, may not shake or overcome, that so we may finish our course with joy, and pass through the Valley of the shadow of death, and fear no evil, but may comfort one another and our selves with this, that we shall for ever be with the Lord, and may say with *Paul*, I  
have

*have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which God the Righteous Judge will give, to me and to all that love Christs appearance; when he shall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that do believe, and shall say, Well done good and Faithful Servant. Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

Woe and for ever woe to every soul of you, that shall finally reject or neglect the offer of such an Heritage and Joy! And blessed be that Grace which hath caused all *true Believers* to prefer it in their highest esteem and choice and seeking. I have looked about to see if there were any better and surer to be had; and I am fully satisfied it must be this or none. I offer you but what God hath caused me, and all that he will save, to choose; and Lord grant that I may never look back to any other; let the Love of God my Heavenly Father, the grace of Jesus Christ my Lord, and the joy of the sanctifying Spirit, sealing up the promise of God as my security, and writing his *Lam* and *Gospel*

*spel* in my heart, be my Heritage and Joy ;  
and *I* shall never envy the most prosperous  
sinner their portion in this life, but shall live  
and dye in the thankful praise of the *God* of  
my salvation, who is *Essential*, *Infinite*, *Joy-*  
*ful Love*. Amen, Amen.

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*F I N I S.*

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